

A Lady —

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1905

and Her Letters

BY KATHERINE E. CONWAY.

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FAMILY SITTING-ROOM SERIES.

A

Lady and Her Letters

By KATHERINE E. CONWAY.

SIXTH EDITION.



BOSTON:
THOMAS J. FLYNN & COMPANY.

1905.

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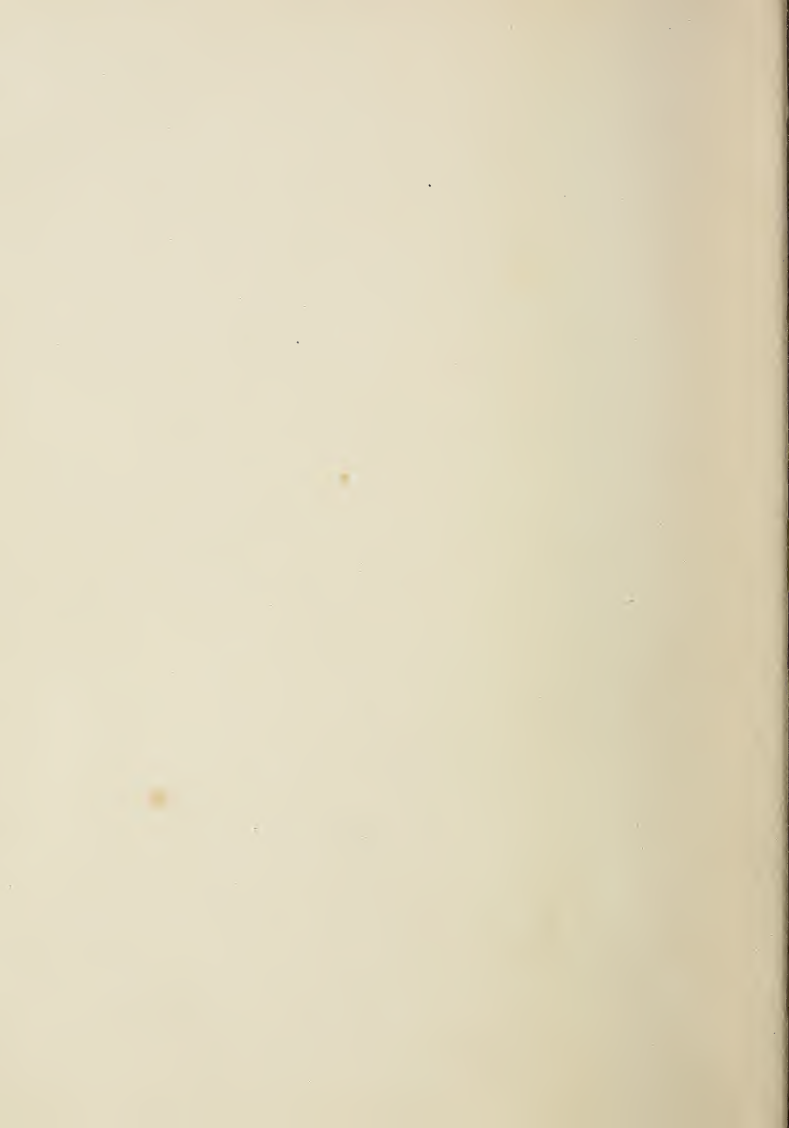
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To

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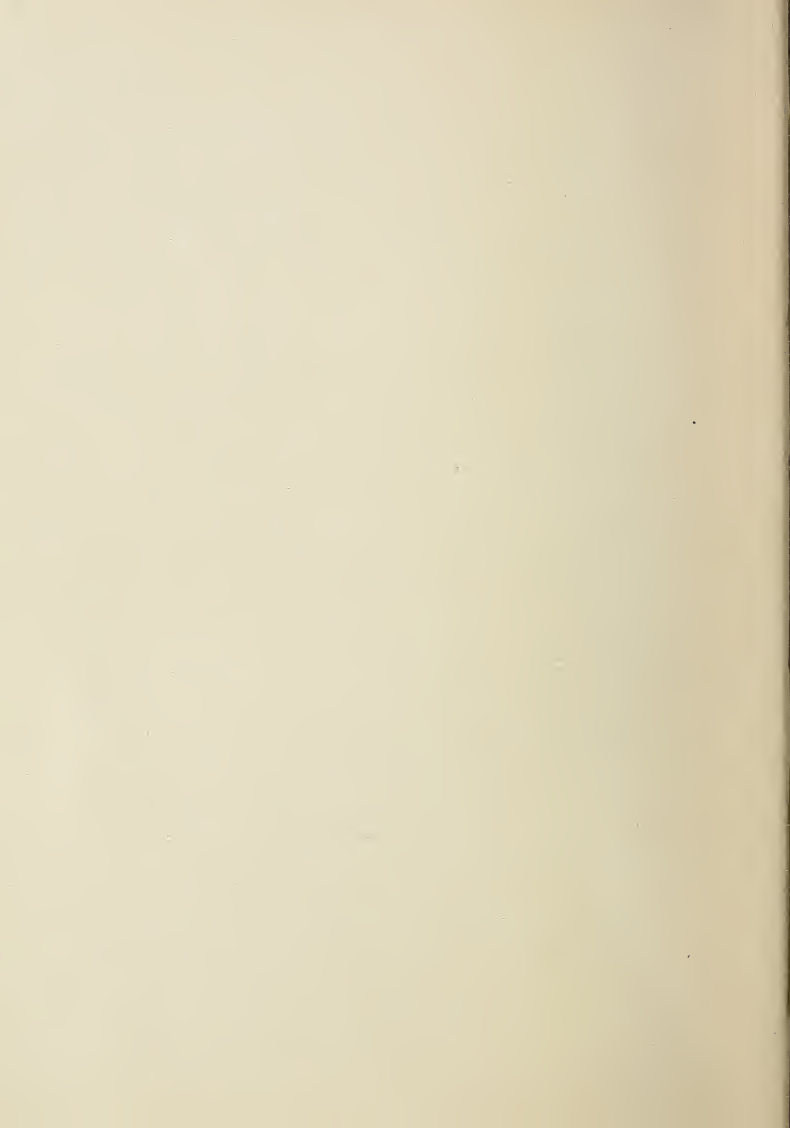
I dedicate

This Little Book.



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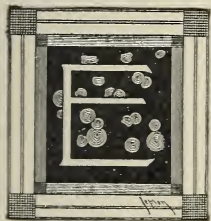
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A LADY AND HER LETTERS.

I.

The Long-Lived Written Word.



VERYBODY has to write letters. Some one of the hundreds of letters which the most ordinary individual will write in the course of his life-time, may make or mar his whole career. Every letter of the hundreds will have its own influence for or against his advancement or happiness. Every one, therefore, should know how to write letters.

Should the composition classes and literary courses in our schools, the post-graduate literary societies and reading circles, of after years, accomplish nothing but to fit the man and woman of average intelligence to

perform well this necessary and frequent duty, they would nevertheless more than justify their existence.

It seems a simple thing to write a letter. Granting that one knows how to write and spell and construct a sentence, there should be, it would seem, no further difficulty. Yet of a multitude of clever, fairly educated people, how few are adepts in the fine art of letter-writing!

Why is it so? Do our teachers, in giving the rules for acquiring the power of expression in writing, forget to emphasize their most ordinary and necessary application? The topics set for a school-girl especially are often too formal, or too remote from her every-day interests and sympathies. Why task her with writing "A Parallel between the Characters of Napoleon and Washington," or an essay on "The Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians"?—we are drawing from real life. She might far better be set at framing an invitation to luncheon or dinner and the answer thereto; an application for a position, or the response to an employer's advertisement for assistants; or, for the development of descriptive powers and a slight indulgence to sentiment and fancy, a letter to a friend, describing the most eventful week in the writer's summer vacation.

So much of character and breeding is inevitably revealed in letters, that too great pains cannot be taken that the revelation be not discreditable and damaging.

Most of the counsels that apply to the spoken word of virtuous and well-bred people, apply with even greater force to the written word. For the spoken word may be half-heard, or forgotten; but the written word remains; and may come back in the most unexpected time and manner, either to the praise or the confusion of the writer.

It behooves one, therefore, to know well what she is about when, to quote from the old-fashioned exordium to the letters of simple people, she "takes her pen in hand."



II.

Business Letters.



BUSINESS letter should be as brief as is consistent with clearness, precision, and courtesy. It should be neatly and legibly written, and dated and signed with the utmost formality.

Introduce no irrelevant matter. If a lady has been hindered from keeping an appointment with her legal adviser at 3 P. M., she should not write a long letter to say that she had an appointment with her dentist at 2 o'clock, and it was so much more trying than she expected, and she was really ill, and had to go right home. Let her simply say that indisposition hindered her from keeping her appointment; and make up her mind to avoid so awkward a conjunction of appointments another time.

If she is ordering goods of any description by letter, her order should be written fully and clearly, the address at which they are to be delivered and the

date on which they are desired, given with scrupulous accuracy, and a copy of the letter kept, until after the order has been satisfactorily filled. .

If a mistake should be made in filling the order, let her see first if, perhaps, her own carelessness in ordering may not be in some sort responsible. In any event, the mistake must be courteously indicated. No matter how aggravating the blunder or the delay, she will not write a petulant nor an angry letter. And I can hardly think of an occurrence which would justify a letter of complaint of the subordinate with whom one may have had business correspondence, to his or her employer.

Nowhere are definiteness, accuracy, legibility, neatness, and courtesy more necessary than in the correspondence between an applicant for employment and her possible employer. The fate of her application not seldom depends on her first letter.

A lady will hardly engage for governess, companion or secretary, the candidate whose application is carelessly worded and scrawled in a slovenly hand on vulgar stationery.

The business man will not be prepossessed in favor of the would-be clerk who forgets to date her letter, and who reverses his initials on the superscription.

The literary aspirant should never imagine that an illegible handwriting will pass for a sign of genius. She would better have her MS. typewritten. She will not help her case with the editor by telling him that it's a first attempt — he will probably discover that in a moment himself; or that she has just "dashed it off" in a moment of enthusiasm; or that she wants it published, because her father or her husband subscribes for the paper, and she would like to give them a little surprise; or that she is greatly in need of money, and would like to have, by return mail, whatever her MS. may be worth.

Neither will she pave the way for a favorable judgment by telling him that a large circle of intelligent friends admires her work and urges its publication. There is no salvation for her literary efforts save in their own intrinsic merit, and the editor reserves the right to judge of that. There is nothing to be done but to send the MS., legibly written and addressed and sufficiently stamped, with a stamped and addressed envelope for its possible return trip to the sender.

A woman's good sense and good breeding are indicated in her choice of stationery, whether in business or friendly correspondence. She does not use pink or green or other high-colored stationery; nor the

gilt-edged, nor fantastically shaped varieties. White or cream-tinted stationery, of smooth finish and firm texture, and ordinary size is always safe. Monograms and sentimental devices should be avoided. A lady with much correspondence does well to have her home address stamped at the head of her note and letter sheets. She should write with good black ink. Colored inks are in bad taste.

One can hardly be too scrupulous in the matter of dates, signatures, and addresses, especially in business correspondence. Don't write at the head of the sheet, "Boston, Thursday," giving your home address somewhere in the body of the letter. Write, rather for example, "1 Grosvenor Park, Boston, Nov. 15, 1894." A married lady should not use her husband's name in her signature. She signs herself "Ellen T. Mortimer," not "Mrs. John M. Mortimer." In writing even to an absolute stranger, she signs as above, writing at the foot of the sheet, Address, Mrs. John M. Mortimer, or enclosing her card.

An unmarried lady writing to a stranger, may indicate how she is to be addressed, either by enclosing her card, or putting Miss in parenthesis before her signature.

We need say nothing about the odious brusqueness

sometimes affected by very young women under the impression that it is "business-like," of precluding their signature with "Yours, etc."!

One has always time to write "Yours truly," "Yours sincerely," "Yours respectfully," all of which are proper forms according to the relative positions of writer and recipient in business correspondence.

A lady who has both business and social intercourse with men and women engaged in the professions or in business, addresses all business letters to their office or place of business; but all personal letters, invitations, etc., to their private residence; unless, indeed, she should be explicitly requested to use the business address for all purposes.

It is almost needless to say that no well-bred person ever thinks of saving herself expense or trouble by leaving at a friend's place of business any object which must necessarily be taken thence to his or her home; as books borrowed from his home library and gifts, including flowers.

III.

Courtesy and Kindness in all Letters.



THE well-bred woman has sometimes, like every one else, disagreeable duties to perform ; among them, the writing of business letters which she would rejoice not to be obliged to write. But she differs from other women in this, that she can do her disagreeable duties courteously. She may have to remind a debtor of his indebtedness, but she will phrase her letter so that while her meaning is clear, he will not be harassed nor humiliated.

The truly well-bred woman is a patient creditor. She does not lend money recklessly, leaving her own debts unpaid ; but when she has made a loan, she does not make the life of the person she has obliged a burden until the debt is liquidated.

She does business transactions in a business-like way. It is unlikely that she will ever be asked to advance a large sum of money without security. However good the security may be, the borrower

assumes not only the money debt, but a debt of gratitude as well; and if he or she be of an honorable nature, it is not at all likely that the latter debt will be forgotten, even after the former has been paid.

So it is not necessary to rub the obligation in till the flesh of the debtor tingles.

Let any of us who are blessed with abundance of this world's goods be large-minded in our dealings, especially with the less favored. Having loaned the money, and been duly secured, let us forget the incident till the note comes due. If it be not promptly paid, wait a little for an explanation; and if it be deemed necessary to write, be kind; assume that there is a good reason for the delay. If some excuse is offered, and more time is asked, accept the excuse and grant an extension of time, if you possibly can. Do it magnanimously; not meanly and grudgingly.

If aught has happened between the lending of the money and the time of its coming due, to make it very necessary or desirable that you should have it at once, say so courteously. But don't press a poor debtor, either by nagging letters, or threatening letters; nor proceed to extreme measures with any debtor, unless you have the gravest reason to believe that you are being victimized by some one who can without difficulty pay his debt.

This is not business-like advice, perhaps, but there is a higher thing than business; and if you have abundance of means and the delay, however long, of money loaned, means not a deprivation of comforts, but, at worst, a little retrenchment in luxuries, choose rather to be known before God and man as lenient and forbearing — though the shrewd call you simple — than praised as a hard-headed business woman who can't be fooled.

Should your debtor be a conscientious, high-minded woman, who really wants to pay you, and is delayed by unforeseen illness, family troubles, want of work, or any such things, think of her shame and humiliation, renewed again and again at every one of those curt, mortifying notes, which are so easy to write and so hard to read.

It is your right? — Yes; but mercy is higher than justice; and you are suffering nothing by your temporary inconvenience in comparison with what she is suffering for being the cause of it.

Don't write high-handed dunning letters; don't remind a debtor of the gratitude she owes you; don't do any of the brutal, cruel things which the rich or well-to-do have in their power against the needy or the lowly, without first reading Christ's parable of

the servant to whom the debt of ten thousand talents was forgiven, and who thereafter put his fellow-servant in prison for a debt of one hundred pence.

“ But,” say certain possible readers, “ comparatively few of us are rich women. We are not in a position to make loans of a thousand, or even a few hundred dollars; so that what you say about ‘good security,’ ‘forbearance,’ ‘extension of time,’ etc., doesn’t apply to us. We are not called upon to practise the magnanimity you urge on us. Our little money transactions deal with dollars or even fractions of dollars, where it would be absurd to raise serious business questions.”

True; but the counsel to delicacy and forbearance in the matter of five hundred dollars applies equally to twenty or even to five; for these qualities are as often absent in the creditor for the small as for the large amount.

It is true that the habit of borrowing is an exceedingly bad one, and that the chronic borrower should be discouraged for his or her own sake; but occasions will arrive in the lives of the best and most independent, when they will need, for a mile or two of the road, a helping hand, and if we are now able to give it, can we say that the day will never dawn when in turn we shall need it?

We remember a conscientious woman who borrowed fifteen dollars from a near friend to tide over an emergency which had to be met before the money could be earned. She had counted on repaying within a month; but a few days after the loan had been made, she had a long letter from the lender, detailing sundry little losses which she had through the carelessness of a servant, and closely estimating the money damage; narrating also, the inconvenience she was at, through small sums owed by friends, etc. The fifteen dollars was still a week out of the reach of the debtor; but it was the longest week she ever knew.

If one has made these small loans, it is mean beyond expression to gossip about them with other friends, either in speech or letter; for in the case of debtors sure to repay you, you needlessly betray their trust and impair their credit; and in the case of careless debtors or those lacking conscience, you reveal your own weakness in trusting them, without helping your chances of getting your money back.

IV.

Food for Your Waste-Basket.



WOMEN of known wealth, and successful professional women often receive borrowing letters — or to call them properly, begging letters — from absolute strangers.

These usually run something after this fashion : —

DEAR MADAM — Though but a short time in the city, I have heard on every side of your magnificent generosity. You are universally esteemed as a humanitarian of the noblest type. This encourages me, a stranger, to appeal to you for a small temporary assistance. I have seen better days ; and am now maintaining myself and my two children, by the exercise of those gifts which formerly delighted a select social circle. Can you lend me twenty dollars till the next quarter of one of my wealthy music-pupils comes due. I have to go to my sick, perhaps dying, husband at Walnutville. I can send you for security an ancestral jewel of great value. It is in my husband's possession, etc. Your suffering fellow-woman,

It is strange that any woman of even relative maturity and experience should fall a victim to a letter like this, but it is true that such an appeal entraps many a victim. Women are soft-hearted, and the reference to one's reputation for generosity is irresistible, even to women who think they are not vain.

The place for such letters is the waste-basket. But, if you have a lingering fear that you may be neglecting a God-sent call, take the trouble to investigate a little first. Otherwise don't demand sympathy if you are taken in.

A lady does not borrow of any one without the extremest need, and when she has contracted a loan she scrupulously retrenches unnecessary expenses until she has repaid it.

But she never appeals to utter strangers for loans. This is a trick, resorted to either by utterly unsophisticated and ill-balanced young women, or — and this more commonly — by hardened adventuresses.

V.

What of the Postal Card?



HEN is it permissible to use a postal card?" asks a young friend.

"My dear," replies an old-fashioned gentlewoman, who looks in on us occasionally, "I never yet have been able to bring my-

self to use one of those wretched things."

We sympathize with the dear lady's sentiment, for the most part; for, with letter postage at two cents, — to put matters on the lowest plane — there is scant justification for using postal cards, even on the score of needful economy.

But the postal card has a few well-defined and permissible uses.

In these days of numerous and large feminine organizations, the secretary of a society may notify members of meetings by postal card.

One may, with one's own family or a very familiar friend, announce by postal, the despatch of a box or

parcel by express, especially, if the latter contain an invoice. Or, under the same conditions, and if greatly pressed for time, one may mention the train by which one expects to arrive from a short journey.

If some one writes for information which can be given in a word or two,—enclosing an addressed postal for the answer, a lady will use the postal; for, to do otherwise, would be to reflect on the manners of the sender.

And here, we think we have exhausted the uses of the postal among well-bred people.

The postal, in the above cases, must contain nothing but the briefest business statement; no address but the superscription; no terms of endearment, no diminutives in signature; not a syllable of news nor other irrelevant matter.

Here is a good form —

MISS AMANDA JONES,
325 LAKE AVE.,
ROCHESTER, N. Y.

(On reverse side),

BOSTON, Dec. 19, 1894.

Box despatched this afternoon by American Express Company.

MARY JONES.

To write on a postal card particulars of your health, inquiries for the health of others, bits of domestic news or local gossip, Christmas greetings, etc., is about as vulgar as it would be to stand on the public street, and call out such information or inquiries to a friend on the other side.

And yet, many women who mean well, and who would be greatly surprised and grieved if they imagined a doubt were raised as to their good-breeding, constantly do these things !

The feminine passion for postals has even worse possibilities.

Have we not seen a check for one hundred dollars and the kind and courteous letter in which it was enclosed, acknowledged on a postal ! As a receipt, it would stand in law, of course ; but who would feel much desire to cultivate a closer acquaintance with the person capable of sending it ?

Have we not seen a Christmas gift acknowledged on a postal card, so closely covered with minute particulars of the sender's health, that it was difficult to decipher it ! As if any one able to perform this feat of chirography on a card, might not have done it on a letter-sheet !

Have we not seen the birth of a son and heir

announced by postal! Can't we recall two women-friends—old and experienced enough to know better—interchanging frequent accounts of their respective summering at beach and mountain, with allusions even to their “Cavaliers,” as they called them,—on postal cards? Have we not seen the postal in which—of all things—one woman conveyed to another her opinion of a third person's discourtesy?

Here is a specimen of the postal card sentimental, so to speak, which is almost a literal transcript from life:—

————— Feb. 11, 1894.

DEAR FRIEND: Your sweet letter came the other day, and now with the twilight shadows falling about me, I send you this little line of acknowledgment and affectionate greeting. May Heaven bless you. . . .

One would not be overwhelmed with surprise at getting congratulations on one's marriage, per postal, from the writer of the above.

It is a question with well-bred people, whether any postals, except the exceedingly few that are permissible, as described, deserve answer or notice in any way. At all events, something should be done to stop careless and inconsiderate people from loading the mails with such matter.

“But,” pleads somebody, “they’re so handy; and bad taste isn’t a sin, I should hope, that it should be denounced so severely.”

True; but bad taste is a sort of danger signal that indicates people, who, if duty does not bind us to them, it is well for us to avoid, lest they become stumbling-blocks to us.

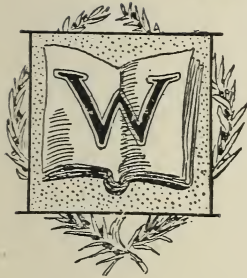
Says Lilian Whiting in her “World Beautiful”:
“A fault of taste . . . is rooted in personality. It is the external manifestation of an internal defect. . . . It is not the result of an impulse of the moment, of a flash of temper, or some erratic and temporary emotion; it is simply a thing that reveals the grain of life, its very quality.”

But defects of taste, like all other defects, can be overcome, if their possessor be observant and not too strong in self-love.



VI.

Family Correspondence.



WHAT a delight to the homesick sojourner in a distant city or a strange land are long, minute, and warm-hearted letters from home! And a delight at least equal to the home-dwellers, especially if their circle of relatives and friends be small, and their lives uneventful, are the letters from the absent dear one, descriptive of a larger life and of unfamiliar scenes and customs.

Such interchange of letters between the separated members of a family tends, more than anything else, to keep warm and bright the glow of family affection. How sad to see those who were nursed at the same breasts, brought up to adolescence under the same roof, drifted hopelessly apart in mature years and even ignorant of one another's whereabouts!

"Somehow, we stopped writing and lost sight of one another," is the common explanation.

Once, and not so long ago, it was only the sons who went afar "to seek their fortune," as the fairy stories have it. The daughters almost never changed the town or city of their home, much less their native skies, except through marriage.

But now it is quite as likely to be the daughter as the son of the family of limited means, who goes away to accept a more remunerative position than she can get in her birthplace. Then, with the reduced rates and improved facilities for foreign travel, many young women have the chance of a trip abroad.

Whatever her duties or her pleasures, the absent one should make time for at least weekly letters to her family. And to whom should the most of these letters go? Surely, if the father and mother are living, to them first of all.

To say nothing of the evidence of unkindness, there is hardly a surer proof of inherent vulgarity in a family than the disposition to overlook the parents. The young woman who thinks that, because her mother is advanced in age, she needs in the way of dress little more than a decent covering, since "she never goes anywhere, anyhow," is reasonably certain to address her letters home to her favorite sister or brother, or mayhap to her chum outside the family,

on the plea that "Mother hardly ever writes a letter herself," and that Frank, or Sadie, or Nellie, will tell her anything of interest.

If she could know what a pride and joy a letter all to herself would be to the dear old mother, and how soon that mother would develop into an excellent correspondent, I think her action would be different.

With women, in most cases, friends and interests fall off, as life advances. The mother, especially, is likely to get out of relation with her own early friends during that long period — the best years of her life — that are absorbed by the care of her young children. In this way, perhaps she falls a little behind the times. Her interests are narrowed to the home-circle.

By-and-by, her children leave the home-nest, or become largely occupied with interests outside the home. How sad for the mother if she is made to feel that she can be no longer companionable to her children, now that her immediate use to them is over; if they are the first to punish her for the consequences of the sacrifices which she has made in their behalf!

Write often to the mother. We remember an aged lady who was kept in the closest interest with the topics of the day, and who developed into a regular and most interesting correspondent through the neces-

sity of answering the frequent letters of an absent son and daughter. If they could have realized the zest their letters gave to her declining years, and the pleasure she took in obtaining information which they requested, and writing her detailed accounts of the home doings, they would have been more than repaid for any slight effort involved in the keeping up of a frequent correspondence. We do not, of course, mean to suggest the exclusion or limitation of other interchange of letters; but only to say that the true lady is always minutely considerate of her own; that she never slights her parents while God leaves them to her; and that if her time for correspondence be limited, she thinks of them most frequently.

Letters home, to whomsoever addressed, should be kind and cheerful, and as interesting as one's opportunities permit one to make them. Never write sharply or pettishly. The written word, implying always, as it does, some degree of premeditation, is vastly more cruel than the unkind spoken word. Never write unnecessary bad news. Don't, for example, write from Chicago to Boston of that little indisposition which probably will have vanished before your letter reaches its destination. Don't write of your trifling disappointments, nor of the accidents

that can be repaired. And these cautions hold good also for the letters from home to the absent one.

The poor Irish widow sending news to her son in America, in Ellen Forrester's touching little poem, is a model of kindly forethought : —

“ Tell him the spotted heifer calved in May ;
She died, poor thing ; *but that you needn't mind ;*
Nor how the constant rain destroyed the hay ;
But tell him God to us was ever kind,
And when the fever spread the country o'er,
His mercy kept the sickness from our door.

“ Be sure you tell him how the neighbors came
And cut the corn and stored it in the barn ;
'Twould be as well to mention them by name —
Pat Murphy, Ned McCabe and James McCarn,
And big Tim Daly from behind the hill ;
But say, agraph — Oh, say I missed him still.”

Separated dear ones may suffer an immense amount of unnecessary pain, through want of knowing what not to write in their letters.

VII.

One Safe Confidential Correspondent.



FORETHOUGHT and consideration do not, however, imply want of confidence.

The young woman, far from her kindred, in a strange city, needs a trusty confidant. If she be wise, her letters home, especially her letters to her father or mother, will be the safety-valve for her natural desire for sympathy. It is dangerous to open one's heart to the chance acquaintance of boarding-house, or place of employment.

It will do much more for the young stranger than merely to relieve her mind, if she accustom herself to full and frank communication with the dear ones at home.

Writing to her mother, she need never fear to be accounted tiresome nor egotistical. While, as we have already said, she should not trouble that sensitive, anxious heart with minute accounts of trivial and

transitory ailments, nor disappointments nor accidents which will be comforted or repaired before her letter can reach its destination, still in all matters of consequence, in all cases where she feels the need of counsel, let her write freely to the one who is ordinarily the most patient, prudent and sympathetic of confidants.

If she has gone away in quest of a better livelihood, let her tell her mother all about her work; its advantages and disadvantages; the associates it gives her, her employers, her remuneration, her progress. Sometimes, progress is very slow, and the worker cannot imagine why others are promoted while she remains stationary. If she has been frank with her mother, perhaps that patient and experienced friend can show her, without hurting her self-esteem, where her want of diligence or tact is keeping her back.

Don't be selfish and shrewd with your family. Don't suppress your successes in writing home, lest they ask a little more help at your hands than you want to give. Perhaps there is an unthrifty brother or sister, who is, as such a one is likely to be, the mother's darling solicitude, and for whom you may be imposed upon a little.

Even so, let not the first knowledge of your improv-

ing fortunes come to your parents from strangers. Be large-hearted, and give what help you can, even at some personal inconvenience or sacrifice. There will come a day when the remembrance of a little selfishness and adroitness with one's kindred will give no pleasure.

We do not mean to excuse the practice common in some families of putting too large a share of the common burden on one; nor of feeling that the successful one should have little personal advantage out of his or her success. Nor do we question the existence of occasional cases where entire confidence is impossible.

But ordinarily, there are ways of meeting the contingency above suggested in a frank and kindly spirit. The mere fact of being away from home, enables one to draw more firmly the line between sweetly rendered duty and pernicious self-sacrifice.

But while telling your successes, don't exaggerate them, nor raise on slight foundation, hopes that cannot be realized.

Be frank, too, about the social side of your life. Here the greater knowledge and sympathy of a mother may be of inestimable value to the young woman who is making her way among strangers.

Higher social opportunities may come to the daugh-

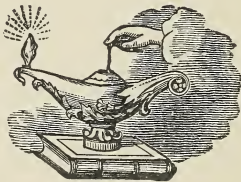
ter than have fallen to the mother's share; and complexities may arise for which her humbler experience affords no parallel. But human nature does not change; and on all serious things, the mother's counsel is sure to be worth having.

In the matter of love-affairs, real or imaginary, the young woman of expansive temperament will save herself untold mortification and perhaps serious trouble, if—at least until after she has had an unmistakable offer of marriage—she will restrict her written confidences to her mother.

Let the letters from home to the absent one be equally candid and kindly. A long, affectionate cheery letter from home on a gloomy and troubled day, may be a turning point in a young life.

Answer her letters in detail. Show interest in her struggles, and pleasure in her successes. Don't imagine that the smallest details of the home-life—the new carpet in the parlor, Julia's first party-gown, or the visit of John's chum, or the school-triumphs of the smallest brother or sister, or the flourishing condition of mother's house-plants, or father's vacation week, are not worth writing. Tell her about the friends who call at the house. Forget no message that shows she is affectionately remembered in her girlhood's home.

Do your share in strengthening those bonds which should be so flexible and finely tempered, that however far they may have to stretch, they will still never break.



VIII.

Letters One would Fain Recall.



IT is in Switzerland, I think, that women are regarded as never coming of age in the sense of being able to forego guardianship of some sort. There are times when beholding the imprudences which some women — women, too, well out of their teens — are capable of in letter-writing, one is disposed to see much sense in the Swiss idea, and to wish for its application — in a discriminating way of course — in America.

Why are women whose training would lead one to look for wiser things, so willing, not to say eager, to enter on correspondences with people of whom they know little; and to commit themselves in indelible ink, to confidences and sentiments, which in years to come they will remember with fear and shame?

Perhaps the question can be answered in a way rather complimentary than otherwise to our sex. The

average woman, even though she be "in society," as the phrase has it, knows, after all, comparatively little of the wicked and heartless world with which men are familiar. Her judgments of men are generally superficial and favorable. Having but little foresight, she has little thought of consequences.

Hence, she drifts quickly into intimacy with the agreeable stranger of either sex, and, if a separation takes place at an early stage of this intimacy, continues by letter the dangerous self-revealings, family business, or personal gossip much less dangerous by word of mouth.

"What is written is written," and these foolish letters will outlive the intimacy of which they were the fruit, and be in damaging evidence, even when that intimacy may have turned to aversion.

Whatever may be said of the prodigality of mutual confidences between women in their letters, there is scant excuse for the reckless effusions of women to men. We are not speaking now of the letters of lovers, on which the whole world smiles indulgently, but of what is called friendly correspondence. Oh, friendship, what mistakes are made in thy name!

After the folly is realized and repented of by the man or the woman — usually the latter — the question arises, "How did it ever begin?"

Did he write first, asking her for the name of that book she mentioned the day before he went away; and adding to the inquiry a few lines to say how much he missed the chats they used to have together? And did she answer promptly, and at much greater length, giving not only the name of the book, but her opinion of it, and stating with perhaps a little over-emphasis of regret, how much she too, missed the chats?

And did it go on, till they were exchanging letters twice a week — just friendly letters of course! — when one day she learned on indisputable evidence that this man who had her photograph, and entirely too much of her personal history, was an utterly good-for-nothing fellow, with whom she should not have exchanged a line?

Or, did this correspondence — only friendly, she would say — begin to take hold on her foolish little heart, and did all days seem dull and dreary save those on which the letters came?

And presently did his letters begin to grow shorter and farther apart, and did her awaking come in the shape of a marked newspaper announcing his marriage, presumably to some young woman who was not quite so good a correspondent?

However it was, letters of hers are extant which she would give worlds to have in her own hands again.

Well for her, if her nature be so modest and sensitive that she takes the bitter lesson humbly to heart, and never needs a repetition of it; for then it gives to her life a grace that perhaps before was lacking—making her distrustful of herself, and wise and merciful for others.

Only when they are needed for the defence of her own or others' gravest interests, as life, reputation, fortune, will a lady keep letters which in any way compromise the writer.

But one may say, "Letters of mine, mementos of follies outgrown and repented of, may be used to put me at a disadvantage, and I should be allowed to have something to offset them."

Not so. Be honorable and generous, without reference to the possible treachery of any one else, and be sure that your best interests will not suffer in the long run.

A lady will never let vanity in the high station of her correspondents, nor in the confidence which they repose in her, lead her to show letters plainly meant for no eyes but her own. She who does so defeats her own aim, incurring only distrust and sometimes contempt as well.

IX.

A Question of Common Sense.



GVEN where the man in question is an old acquaintance and a man of honor, the woman should still beware of any over-eagerness for correspondence. In these days, when women are so active in literature and journalism; when wage-earning women are constantly brought into every-day business relations with men; and when even women of leisure, through their activity in religious and charitable organizations, have much necessary intercourse both in speech and letter, with the clergy, public men, their masculine associates in good works, it is important to remember the good sense, consideration, and reserve which mark the correspondence of the wise and well-bred woman.

In the cases suggested above, the woman is often obliged, by the exigencies of business or charity, to open the correspondence. The interchange of notes may be necessarily frequent, without the slightest idea on either part of personal interest in the writer. But

if such friendly interest should be awakened, let the evidence of it, by all means, begin on the man's side.

Good sense and delicacy in a woman do not imply prudery. If the correspondent adds to his business communication a friendly inquiry, or suggests an appointment to talk over some case which it is difficult to settle by letter, she must not, in the name of all that is gracious and sensible, put into such proceeding a meaning which is far from the man's thoughts; and astonish and annoy him with a coquettish or a prudish answer. She must be frank and simple, as she would be with one of her own sex in a similar case; answering his kind inquiry pleasantly; studying his convenience in the appointment.

She must not expect a priest to neglect his sick-calls, nor any other busy man to leave his patients, or clients, or customers, to attend her in her drawing-room for a discussion of the ways and means to the Authors' Reading which she is getting up for her pet charity, the Home for Aged Couples. She must consider the time and strength of the man who is making the sacrifice of needed rest or recreation to assist her good work, and allow him to render his services in the way which suits him best

I remember here the visit to Boston a few years

ago of a gentlewoman famous for her position and ancestry, and still more widely and honorably known for her noble work in developing the Cottage Industries of Ireland. She brought with her, among her introductions to notable Bostonians, one to a well-known lawyer.

As this gentleman emerged from his private office one afternoon, after a long consultation with a client, he noticed at the end of the row of clients awaiting their turn, a strange lady of distinguished bearing. He advanced towards her, whereupon, she presented her letter and her coronetted card.

“But, Lady ——” he exclaimed, “why did you not send these to me, and allow me the pleasure of calling on you at your hotel, in the interest of a cause which I also have at heart.”

“Because your time is more precious than mine,” she answered pleasantly; “and I am asking a service at your hands which, with your own professional duties, it will inconvenience you to render, however great your sympathy.”

The wise and truly self-respecting woman is not conceited. Hence, when a man honors her request for his co-operation in some good work, she accounts the service done for the sake of the work, not for her

sake ; and is always convinced that the same assent had been given as cheerfully to any other petitioner.

In her written intercourse with men on matters of business or charity, the well-bred woman, if a widow or maiden, is devoid of that silly self-consciousness which sees in every unmarried man a possible admirer.

A young woman needing information on a matter of concern to her was directed to address the business manager of a certain publishing house, with whom she had already a slight acquaintance.

But she blushed and bridled. Oh never ! how could she write to him. What would people think ? Wasn't he a fascinating bachelor !

It would have been a little cruel perhaps — though wholesome in the long run — to answer that the correspondence could be a matter of indifference even to one of the participators in it, to whom it would never occur to think of the state in life of his inquirer.

Let a woman be frank, amiable and devoid of self-consciousness in the spirit of her letters, when she engages in any correspondence such as is above considered. As to the substance of it, let it be brief and to the point.

Brevity should not involve curttness nor obscurity.

A letter of ten lines may be long, if the business could have been easily despatched in five lines. On the other hand, a letter of six pages may be short, if the importance of the business, and the necessity for a clear and explicit statement demand it.

In such correspondence a woman may sometimes find that a man of kind heart and good intentions, to whom she inevitably contracts obligations on her own account or that of her charities, is deficient in the minor graces of perfect courtesy. She may find sometimes a touch of business brusquerie which makes her feel she has perhaps blundered by proffering a request at a difficult time. But that does not excuse her for the omission of a single detail of consideration on her part, in the transaction of the business that remains to be done; nor of any remissness or coldness in her note of thanks; nor of the obligation of showing in time to come her gratitude and appreciation in any becoming and possible way.

She is responsible for her own behavior, and while she must never be importunate, no small omission on the part of one who serves her cordially in large things, justifies the showing of wounded pride by reciprocal omissions.

X.

Misunderstandings by Mail.



HERE are hundreds of virtuous, kind-hearted, and well-bred people who would never transgress on any of the points mentioned in the foregoing chapters, who will yet impulsively attempt the difficult and dangerous task of rectifying their misunderstandings with friends by means of correspondence.

Difficult, we say, for it would take reams of paper and quarts of ink, even under favorable circumstances, to accomplish the result that might be arrived at in an hour's conversation; and, dangerous, because the parties to the correspondence being out of touch with each other, so to speak, the written words are capable according to the mood of the receiver, of taking on a meaning never intended, and cannot be helped out, as in personal intercourse, with the tones and inflections, the looks and the gestures which give to language half its meaning.

Then, there are men and women, warm-hearted, demonstrative in manner, fluent in conversation, too, who have no facility in written expression. They chill and stiffen the moment they put pen to paper.

I have known a man of this type, who, writing to his wife, would begin, "Dear Jane," and end, "Yours truly"; and another, the kindest and fondest of relatives, who would write from the most interesting scenes, which he would describe in person with life-like vividness, the meagerest and driest of notes, without a word of endearment, and concluding invariably, as he might conclude a letter to the merest acquaintance. I have seen the same peculiarity, though less frequently, with affectionate and demonstrative women.

Manifestly, the person of similar temperament, but so fluent with his pen that his letters really reflect his personality, would never straighten out a tangle by correspondence with friends of the type above described.

Let us take a case where the attempt is made. Two women have long been friends, but by reason of near neighborhood, common interests, and opportunities for frequent interchange of visits they have almost never had occasion for correspondence.

On one unfortunate evening they are together at a little social assemblage, or their club or charity meeting. Marion has had domestic worries during the day, and is in a morbidly sensitive condition. She has counted on walking home with her friend, and relieving her mind a little.

Susan, not being gifted with second-sight, knows nothing of this; and being, moreover, quite pre-occupied during the evening with another old friend, whom she has less frequent opportunities of meeting, observes nothing unusual about Marion, simply exchanges greetings with her, and hurries home to some waiting duty, without offering the explanation that she does not know is needed.

If Marion were in her normal state, she would take no offence, and would run in the following day for a morning chat over her trouble. But with her mental vision a little awry with her own especial grievance, she sees everything out of proportion, and after brooding over her friend's unusual action half the night, convinces herself that she has been purposely snubbed and slighted.

And then in an evil hour, she writes Susan a sorrowful and mildly reproachful note, very vague as to the offence committed, and very clear as to her own wounded feelings.

Susan is mystified and hurt. Her first and best impulse is to go right to her friend, and find out what the difficulty really is. But her pride is up, and she won't be outdone as a letter-writer. Her response falls like lead on the heart of her sensitive friend. Letters fly back and forth for a few days. The writers get down in swift gradation from "Dear Marion" and "Dear Susan" to "Miss Jones" and "Miss Robinson;" so much irrelevant matter is introduced that the original difficulty is lost sight of; each discovers heretofore unsuspected defects and causes of offence in the other, and their friendship receives a wound which, if not fatal, is exceedingly dangerous and slow to heal.

And here let us say, in all earnestness: Don't believe the silly sentimentalists who tell you that lovers or friends find their love or friendship only cemented by little quarrels. Things are said in these differences that humble and hurt, and are never, however fervent the reconciliation, wholly forgotten; nor the constraint which they occasion wholly removed.

In the case of lovers or friends, one or other must be very magnanimous, patient and forbearing, if their mutual relations are not to be eventually the cause of more grief than joy.

“Beware the entrance to a quarrel,” but if you come to it, don’t stand on ceremony as to who should take the step that safely carries both past the danger.

Be sure you really have a grievance, before you demand an explanation. If you think you have, try to see your friend and talk it out together. You will generally find that you have been shying at shadows.

If you must write, be generous. Don’t accuse. In a case like the common one above given, say something like this, —

“DEAR ———:—I had wanted especially to talk with you last night; and am grieved because you went away without seeming to know or notice. Maybe you had some anxiety of your own. When can I see you for a good chat?”

It may cost a little sacrifice of one’s pride to write a note like this: but no harm can possibly come of it. On the contrary, it will scatter the little mist, as a fresh breeze would, and leave the light of your friendship undiminished.

XI.

When Silence is Golden.

DON'T write when you are vexed — however just the provocation. You will surely say something that you will later have cause to wish unsaid.

If you have received a captious, fretful, bitter, unjust, or even spiteful and impertinent letter, the best rebuke you can possibly give the writer is absolutely to ignore it. To "talk back" with your pen puts the offender on her mettle. After she sent that letter, ten to one she would have been glad to call it back. She had a bad quarter of an hour thinking how you would receive it. But your answer comes at once, full of annoyance and pain. She begins to justify herself, and your peace of mind and dignity suffer.

Pay no apparent attention to the unjust or impertinent letter. Give its writer time to think it over, and, in all probability, she will eventually see her

blunder and try to repair it. If she does not, you are still the gainer by ceasing to hold intercourse with her.

Christian charity obliges us to feel kindly and act kindly to all ; but it does not oblige us to invite insults for the sake of forgiving them ; nor to keep our minds in a state of unrest and sadness by intercourse with people to whom we are not bound by duty, and with whom, by reason of difference in temperament and training, we could never assimilate.

Outside of such cases as the above, however, a lady tries to answer as promptly and fully as possible all the letters which she receives.

Business letters, for obvious reasons, should never be allowed to stand unanswered. Remittances should be immediately acknowledged ; if only by a line or two. Accounts rendered should be met by full payment, if possible ; partial payment as next best thing ; or a word of courteous explanation, if the delay of payment be inevitable.

If you have given your name as a reference—and need we emphasize the necessity for caution and conscience in doing this?—to any one seeking employment, be prompt in answering the letter of his or her possible employer. Remember that the whole future of a fellow-being may hang on your prompt and kind keeping of your word.

A question arises here as to how far the men and women whose reputations make them, in a sense, public characters, are in conscience or courtesy bound to answer the questions which the mail is constantly pouring in upon them. It were a heavy task to count the requests for financial assistance, for employment, for "influence," for advice, for co-operation in charitable schemes, that beset the public man, or the woman of letters, in the course of a month, both from friends and acquaintances and from absolute strangers. It is part of the penalty of fame.

"I should have to employ an extra clerk, and increase my income by \$10,000 a year to be able to cover these demands," said an eminent professional man, of his own case.

And a well-known woman of letters declared that she would need about three hours a day to cover the interrogations that drifted in daily to her desk.

"I have had scarcely a letter to-day," she said, pointing to a large pile, "that did not contain a request for something or other, most of them preferred by people I never saw or heard of."

Mrs. S. encloses tickets for the appearance, under her patronage of a young dramatic reader—"A very select affair, dear; right in my own drawing-room.

Tickets \$2 apiece, and you won't mind taking three, to help the dear girl."

Miss Brown, of whom an intimate friend says that she lies awake nights devising schemes to plunder her friends in the interest of her beneficiaries, invites a subscription of ten dollars to a testimonial which she is getting up for a most estimable lady who needs a trip to Europe for her health.

A young widow, a perfect stranger, writes from New Orleans to ask her to find a newspaper correspondence for her in Boston. She thinks she can write; she once won a prize for a Prohibition story.

Another woman dumps upon the long-suffering author a MS. of two hundred pages, requesting a written criticism of it, at her earliest convenience.

A college youth wants material for a certain biographical sketch which he is asked to prepare for the commencement.

A young teacher wants paying work on a newspaper during her summer vacation so she "won't lose any time."

A man who is getting up a library for sailors wants autograph copies of all her works.

A pious lady who is conducting a journal for a church fair wants from her an article for each of its six issues — the first one to be delivered to-morrow.

Miss E., whom she knows but slightly, asks her to arrange a lecture tour for her through the New England States.

And Miss F., whom she never met but once, and of whom she knows absolutely nothing, wants permission to use her name as a reference in her application for a place as invalid's companion.

How should this woman with more demands on her time and money than she can possibly respond to, dispose of these letters ?

She should have the courage to return out of the three tickets for the dramatic recital, the two which she cannot afford to take.

Prudence, as well as kindness, may oblige her to participate in the testimonial ; but she will not offend against charity nor courtesy by returning the MS. unread, referring the college youth to the Public Library, and letting the rest of the letters go by default.

A lady will think more than twice before she writes a letter to an absolute stranger, especially a letter soliciting a favor.

The fact that the literary, or musical, or artistic work of man or woman is before the public does not make the author, or musical composer, or artist, public property.

We do not speak, now, of course, of the letters of appreciation and grateful acknowledgment to author or artist for pleasure or benefit derived from his book, or song, or picture; nor the word of intelligent criticism, or suggestion, or even remonstrance, which is sometimes in order; nor the welcome line of encouragement which the older worker sends out of a kind and helpful heart to the young beginner on the road to the temple of fame.

We speak only of the unreason of writing to one of whose private life and circumstances we know nothing, but whose public work is manifestly of a nature to absorb most of his time and strength, to request services which would involve a great outlay of both, especially when he knows nothing of our character nor capabilities except what our exceedingly inconsiderate letter reveals.

The public man or woman of letters is under no obligation to take the slightest notice of these petitions. It is a stretch of kindness and courtesy, if he or she send a line of acknowledgment and regret.

If we but stop a moment and consider what the obligatory labor of the statesman and the successful author must be; also, that they probably have in addition family cares, and that being mere mortals

they need rest and recreation, we will hesitate before we write in the interest of the Woman's Rest Tour to Bourke Cockran or Frederic Coudert; or ask Richard Malcolm Johnston to read our little MS. novel of five hundred pages; or Edmund Clarence Stedman to look up a publisher and secure favorable terms for our first volume of poems; or Agnes Repplier to arrange the course of lectures which we long to give but which the world is not, perhaps, quite ready for. Nor shall we expect the overworked journalist, whose time is but little at his own disposal, to go about arranging syndicates for us.

Such requests as above alluded to are made in utter ignorance of the time and effort which are needed, even under reasonable and favorable conditions, to set such enterprises as we are interested in afloat.

It should be needless to say that we should not ask references of people who do not know us; and yet what prominent personage has not been called upon to stand social or business sponsor to people of whom he hardly knows the face and name?

Again, let us be considerate in the pushing of good works, and the solicitation of financial help, with public men, however rich they are reputed to be, or

however generous; or how worthy, soever, the charity we are forwarding.

We are doubtless but one of many, and there is a limit to the longest purse.



XII.

Letter of Courteous and Loving Duty.

BUT for ourselves, who are not rich nor famous, and whose correspondence, therefore, is only of the ordinary family, friendly, and social order, let us answer promptly those letters which demand response.

Such, of course, are all invitations to social functions. It is not enough, in such cases, to assume that "silence gives consent:" one should write at once and definitely whether or not one can accept the invitation to a dinner party, ball, musical, luncheon, formal reception, or other social event.

The reason for this is obvious.

For her table arrangements, grouping of guests, etc., the hostess needs to know as early as possible how many and whom she must plan for. And this holds as good for the little social events among people of moderate means as for the "functions" among the late Ward McAllister's "Four Hundred."

There is only one way to acknowledge a formal invitation; and that is by a formal note of acceptance or regret, addressed to the one who sends the invitation. One may be very well acquainted with the sister or cousin or aunt of the prospective hostess, but one is not therefore justified in sending word by any of these personages — “I’ll come.”

There are few things which conduce more to the preservation of cordial and unconstrained intercourse even between intimate friends, or prospective relatives than the observance of the little formalities instituted to keep society pleasantly together. Why should one’s dearest friend, or one’s sister or brother who, residing at the other end of a large city is sometimes more easily reached by a note than by a personal visit, neglect to answer as to whether or not he or she can meet the friends from Philadelphia to whom one is to give a tea the next Sunday evening? Let us consider as we would be considered in all these things.

A lady is prompt in her letters of congratulation to her relatives and friends, whom she cannot reach in person, on all the occasions which custom and good feeling decide to be so remembered; as betrothals, marriages, birthdays, and wedding anniversaries; ordinations and religious professions, and their more

important anniversaries, as silver and golden jubilee days; notable accessions of fortune or honor.

Such letters should not be perfunctory, but hearty and joyous. No irrelevant matter—especially of an uncongenial kind—should be introduced. The writer should not point morals, nor draw contrasts, nor intimate that love may fail, and that fortune is fickle. Half-hearted and grudging congratulations are better unsaid; and compliments with a monition included are not allowable, at least between people of equal age and condition.

Letters of sympathy are even a more delicate test of the good feeling and good taste of the writer. The condolences that are sent with evident intention to save the writer the trouble, or the strain on her feelings, of a personal call, were much better unwritten.

“But I never know what to say on a call of condolence,” says a young friend. “And I’d rather go without my breakfast than write a letter of condolence.”

The question is rather of what not to say at such calls, and in our letters of sympathy. But the right thing and the kind thing is to call on your bereaved friend as soon as possible after the bereavement. She may not be able to see you, but she will certainly

appreciate your thought of her. But if she can see you, your sympathetic silence, the tender clasp of your hand, your very presence will say everything. If, however, distance or other good cause hinders your call, be very careful about your letter. The bereaved heart is sensitive. I beg you will not write that you meant to call, but the day was so hot, or so cold, or so rainy. Or that you would have come on a certain afternoon, only it was so hard to get a car — as if there were not seven afternoons and as many mornings and evenings in a week! Or, you thought of calling on a certain day, but you had to go out to Cohasset to those delightful people, the Gays; and so on. These examples are not drawn from fancy; I have very lately seen letters of condolence on the above plan, and from one who would be painfully surprised if she knew that any one questioned either her politeness or her kindness of heart.

Letters of this sort offend against courtesy and kindness both.

The thought which will rectify our action in such cases is “How should I like to be dealt with in my own sorrow?”

You know you would not like to sit solitary in the desolated house in the first dreadful weeks following

on death's visit. You know it would grieve you to find that a friend — lavish, in sunny days, of protestations of affection — would not bear a trifling discomfort from heat or cold, nor postpone a pleasure for your sake in your sorrow.

Don't take the preacher's tone in your letters. Let them show, especially in the first weeks of bereavement, that you share your friend's grief. Speak of the Divine consolations, and of resignation to the Divine Will, but tenderly, modestly, humbly, that the sorrowing heart may not feel chilled nor rebuked.

Here, especially, the respective relations of writer and recipient must be sedulously remembered. Here, again, even more carefully than in letters of opposite character, are the formal and perfunctory to be avoided.

After all, the kind and considerate heart alone can guide the hand aright in letters of sympathy and all other correspondence.

XIII.

What to do with Anonymous Letters.

FOR a last word let us touch briefly on that epistolary pest, the anonymous letter. I will not say that a lady never receives one. There are too many spiteful and envious people in the world, for the winner of any notable success not to be the probable target of these poison-tipped darts, whose point of departure cannot be traced back.

Yet I have known more than one woman of sufficiently marked social or professional success, and charm of person or manner to make her an object of envy to small and jealous natures, who, notwithstanding, never received an anonymous letter; just as she never received distasteful observation or attention in travelling. Such a woman is of the few who, by the meekness with which they wear their distinction, and their unremitting kindness and interest in others' successes, somewhat veil their own, and by disarming jealousy, escape its more active demonstrations.

But such women are but a small fraction of one per cent of the attractive and successful of their sex.

The favorite feminine target of the anonymous letter-writer seems to be the woman who is receiving marked attentions or who is known to be engaged. The phenomenal woman above noted escapes the anonymous letter-writer by an unannounced and very brief engagement. But for the average young betrothed, half the joy of the time is in her right to receive her lover's open devotion and to show her pride in him; in the family festivities and the congratulations of her friends. But some day comes the letter signed "A Friend," "A Well-Wisher," "One Who Knows," or any other cowardly mask of a signature. There are dark hints, ordinarily reflecting on the past or present life of her lover, sometimes thinly disguised jests or gibes. But the object is always the same—to excite suspicion and thus poison happiness. The young wife, as well as the young betrothed, is often the victim of these vicious missives.

Now what does a prudent woman, with proper respect for herself and for the man to whom she is betrothed, or whose name she bears, under such circumstances? Just one thing. She burns the anonymous letter and forgets it. She does not carry it one

hour on her person; she takes no one into her confidence about it; she makes no attempt to identify the handwriting. She contemptuously ignores it, and goes her way untroubled.

There may be an exceptional case of persecution by anonymous letter which will justify man or woman in having recourse to the protection of the law; but ordinarily, the letters cease if they are disregarded, and this is true of anonymous letters of every sort.

The anonymous troubler of your peace has an eye on you, be sure. If he find that the poisoned arrows are broken against the granite of your confidence and reserve, he will soon tire of the amusement of shooting them at you, and will try them on more vulnerable material.

Need we add that a lady never, for any conceivable motive, writes an anonymous letter? There is never a justification for it. One should not write a line to any human being on any subject to which one would shrink from affixing the full signature.

The anonymous letter, whose contents are trivial and innocent, is silly; the anonymous letter containing a grave charge is cowardly. If you know that a danger threatens a friend, give her warning, and tell her honestly on what your apprehensions are founded.

Or, in the case of the young and inexperienced, warn parents or guardians.

If you cannot do this, hold your peace.

Another thing—let nothing tempt a woman into anything like a familiar correspondence with man or woman whom she has never seen, and as to whose personality and circumstances she has no reliable information. If any one wants to know, not the dangerous, but the ridiculous and unpleasant possibilities of such a correspondence, let her read that clever story of Maria Edgeworth's "*L'Amie Inconnue*," which we would like better with the plain English title of "*The Unknown Friend*."

If the foregoing little papers, collected in their present form at the request of many friends, need justification may it not be found in the tremendous postal service, one-third at least of whose energies are employed in the transmission of letters which should never have been written?

APPENDIX.

XIV.

Superscriptions, Addresses, Invitations.

IN compliance with a very general request, following the publication of the first edition of "A Lady and Her Letters," this chapter on superscriptions and addresses, which the author has endeavored to make comprehensive, is added to the book.

A Catholic lady ought to know and observe the correct usage in writing to ecclesiastics.

It is unlikely that she will ever have to write to His Holiness, the Pope; but if she should, the superscription should be, for example, as follows:

His Holiness,
Pope ———,
Rome, Italy.

and the letter should begin.

Most Holy Father.

The superscription and address for a cardinal who is also an archbishop should be like this:—

His Eminence,
James Cardinal Gibbons,
Archbishop of Baltimore,
Baltimore, Md.

Within the letter, Your Eminence, his full name and title being repeated at the bottom of the letter.

For the apostolic delegate,

His Excellency,
The Most Reverend ———, D. D.,
Apostolic Legation,
Washington, D. C.

and within, Your Excellency.

For an archbishop,

The Most Reverend John J. Williams, D. D.
Archbishop of Boston,
Boston, Mass.

and within, Your Grace, or, where less formality is proper, Most Reverend dear Archbishop.

Catholics or non-Catholics can use either of these forms, or, if they prefer, Most Reverend dear Sir.

Bishops are addressed as above, with the substitution of Right Reverend for Most Reverend.

“Your Grace” is not used in addressing a bishop.

In Europe and in Canada a bishop is addressed as My Lord, Your Lordship.

Our American Bishops object to these titles : —

“Lord me no lords; you left your lords in Ireland,” said Archbishop (then Bishop) Kenrick to an Irish priest, who addressed him according to the custom of the latter’s country.

A well-bred American Catholic sojourning in foreign lands will, however, follow the custom of the country in the matter of ecclesiastical and secular titles.

In Ireland all bishops are addressed Most Reverend.

Religious usually address an archbishop or a bishop, Most Reverend dear Father, Right Reverend dear Father; and a lay Catholic may use this form of address in writing to the archbishop or bishop of the diocese in which he lives.

Abbots are addressed as the Right Reverend.

Monsignori are of various grades, some having the title of the Right Reverend, others of the Very Reverend.

Vicars-general are addressed in this form :

The Very Reverend Peter Gray, V. G.

or, if he be also a doctor of divinity,

The Very Reverend William Bryne, D. D., V. G.

and within, Very Reverend dear Sir, Very Reverend dear Father or Doctor; never Dear Vicar-General.

Deans, superiors of seminaries, and sometimes presidents of colleges are also the Very Reverend.

A secular priest is addressed in this form: —

The Reverend John Martin.

or, if he be a permanent rector,

The Reverend Francis Desmond, P. R.

or a doctor of divinity,

The Reverend James Stone, D. D.

If a priest have the degree of D. D. and any other degree or title, the D. D. comes first, as,

The Reverend Arthur Fitzgerald, D. D., LL. D.

except when he is a member of a religious order or congregation, in which case the initials of the society come first, as,

The Very Reverend John Hogan, S. S., D. D.

The names of priests who are members of religious

orders or congregations are followed by the initials which designate the society, as,

C. M., for Congregation of the Mission, (sometimes called Lazarist or Vincentian Fathers).

C. P., Congregation of the Passion (Passionist Fathers).

C. PP. S., Congregation of the Most Precious Blood.

C. R., Congregation of the Resurrection.

C. S. B., Congregation of St. Basil.

C. S. C., Congregation of the Holy Cross.

C. S. P., Congregation of St. Paul (Paulist Fathers).

C. SS. R., Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (Redemptorist Fathers).

C. S. Sp., Congregation of the Holy Ghost.

C. S. V., Congregation of St. Viateur.

J. F., Josephite Fathers.

M. S., Missionary Fathers of La Salette.

M. S. H. Missionary Fathers of the Sacred Heart.

O. C., Order of Charity.

O. C. C., Order of Calced Carmelites.

O. M. C., Order of Minor Conventuals of St. Francis.

O. M. Cap., Order of Capuchin Fathers.

- O. M. I., Oblates of Mary Immaculate.
 O. P., or O. S. D., Order of Preachers, or Order of
 St. Dominic (Dominican Fathers).
 O. Prem., Order of Premonstrants.
 O. S., Order of Servites.
 O. S. A., Order of St. Augustine.
 O. S. B., Order of St. Benedict.
 O. S. F., Order of St. Francis.
 O. S. H., Oblates of the Sacred Heart.
 P. S. M., Fathers of the Pious Society of Missions.
 S. J., Society of Jesus (Jesuit Fathers).
 S. M., Society of Mary (Marist Fathers).
 S. P. M., Society of Fathers of Mercy.
 S. S., Sulpician Fathers.

In addressing a secular priest, do not write,

The Reverend Father James Jones,

but simply,

The Reverend James Jones.

Neither write,

The Reverend Father Smith,

when, by an effort of memory, or a glance at the

Catholic Directory, you can ascertain his full name, and write,

The Reverend Joseph Smith.

A priest is to be addressed at the church to which he is attached, as,

*The Reverend George Johnston,
Rector of St. Joseph's Church.*

or, if he be an assistant,

*The Reverend Paul Trainer,
St. Joseph's Church.*

Within the letter, a priest, secular or regular, should be addressed, Reverend dear Sir, Reverend dear Father, or Dear Father (surname). A Doctor of Divinity is addressed as, for example, Dear Reverend Doctor Stone.

Heads of Brotherhoods are often addressed as Reverend Brother, the Reverend in this case, as with the heads of religious orders of women, being simply an honorary title. Individual religious in the brotherhood are simply Brother James or Brother John, as the case may be; and within, Dear Sir, or Dear Brother James.

Heads of religious communities of women are

addressed, according to the custom of the order or congregation, as Reverend Mother (name), Mother (name), Madame (name), Sister Superior (name); and within, Dear Madame (a proper address for any lady), Dear Reverend Mother, Dear Mother, Dear Sister Superior. When one has occasion to write to the head of a convent and does not know the name of the Superior, address, Mother Superior or Sister Superior, according to the custom of the order or congregation. Some, like the religious of the Visitation, give the title of Mother to the head of every house; some, like the Sisters of Notre Dame, accord it only to the General Superior.

But never be guilty of the tautology of Mother Superioress or Sister Superioress.

Private religious are properly addressed as Dear Madame or Dear Sister.

A Catholic lady who has much correspondence with ecclesiastics and religious will do well to keep the Catholic Directory among her reference books.

The Catholic who has occasion to write to Protestant clergymen uses the titles by which they designate themselves. This is recognized as an obligation of courtesy.

One does not commit one's self to a belief in the

validity of Anglican orders by addressing a bishop of the Protestant Episcopal communion, as,

*The Right Reverend Luke Grafton, D. D.,
Bishop of Fond du Lac,
Wis.*

any more than Pope Pius IX. made common cause with the Southern Confederacy by answering the letter of Jefferson Davis to the title which that gentleman assumed.

The President of the United States is addressed as,
His Excellency,

*The President of the United States,
Executive Mansion,
Washington, D. C.*

and within the enclosure, Mr. President.

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is addressed as,

*The Honorable,
The Chief Justice of the United States,
Washington, D. C.*

Judges of the Supreme Court as,

*The Honorable Justice (name),
Washington, D. C.*

Within the enclosure they are addressed as Your Honor.

Judges of the circuit courts and all other judges, senators, members of Congress or of the State Legislatures, and mayors of cities get Honorable before their names. Custom seems to dictate that a man who has this prefix through an elective office, retains it for the rest of his life; and an aged man, of notable services to the community, though he has never held office, is often addressed as The Honorable.

Members of Congress have M. C. after their names while in office, as Honorable Bourke Cockran, M. C.

The Governor of Massachusetts is, by law, His Excellency; and though the same obligation does not exist elsewhere, governors of States generally are so designated.

Address a governor, for example, as follows:—

His Excellency,

Hon. Frederic T. Greenhalge,

Governor of Massachusetts,

and within, Your Excellency.

A mayor, as, for example,

Hon. William L. Strong,
Mayor of New York.

and within, Your Honor or Dear Sir.

Military and naval titles precede the name of those who bear them, while the initials U. S. A. and U. S. N. follow, as, General William Sullivan, U. S. A., Commodore Jacob Jones, U. S. N.

Members of the foreign legations in the United States are usually styled His Excellency. If a member of a legation have no other title, he is properly addressed as The Honorable. For the full titles and ranks of these dignitaries, consult Spofford's American Almanac.

A proper and simple conclusion of letters to eminent churchmen or statesmen always is,

I have the honor to be,

Mr. President, Your Grace, Your Excellency (as the case may be),

Yours very respectfully,

Members of the United States Consular Service are styled simply Esquire. Members of the Diplomatic Service of the United States are The Honorable.

Physicians are addressed, for example, as,

Francis Bowditch, M. D.

or,

Dr. Francis Bowditch.

but the Dr. and M. D cannot, of course, be used together. The physician is addressed within the enclosure as Dear Sir or Dear Doctor —, but not, Dear Doctor without the surname.

If a man hold office as the superintendent of a state or civic department, or membership on a commission, his title, when it is desirable to use it, never precedes, but always follows his name. For example, well-bred people never write nor say, Superintendent of Streets John Brown, but, Mr. John Brown, Superintendent of Streets; Chairman Rapid Transit Commission Crocker, but, Hon. George G. Crocker, Chairman of the Rapid Transit Commission.

These official designations are not used in social correspondence.

Esq. is properly used in the United States after the name of private citizens of acknowledged social position, lawyers, and literary men who have no college or university degrees. In any of these cases, however, Mr. is equally proper. It should be used instead of Esq. in invitations.

It does not follow, however, that Esq. can be always substituted for Mr. It is proper to address the humblest laborer as Mr. when one has occasion to write to him; but it would be in very bad taste to give him the title of Esq.

It is needless to say that Mr. and Esq. cannot be used together.

Dear Sir or My dear Sir is a proper beginning for letters to any of the dignitaries mentioned in the foregoing pages, except where another form is given, or for letters to any gentleman, except where one's acquaintance warrants the less formal "Dear Mr. (name)" or one's kinship or friendship permits the use of the baptismal name.

Need we say that "Dear" in the cases mentioned is not a term of endearment, but simply the softening of the written word, which the eyes and voice would supply for the same word, spoken? And yet, through prudery or some other nonsense, women have been known to begin letters to gentlemen with Sir, or Mr. —, not realizing that this form of address verges on the insulting.

Even the most business-like of business letters begins Dear Sir, except when one is writing to a firm, when a proper form is, for example,

*Messrs. Brown, Durrell & Co.,
Boston.*

Gentlemen (not Dear Sirs) :—

Only in business letters is it proper to write the full name and address at the beginning of the letter, as

*Messrs. Pitt & Scott,
39 Broadway,
New York.*

Gentlemen :—

In all letters to dignitaries, ecclesiastical, civil, or military, in all friendly correspondence, the name and titles (but not the residence) are given at the foot of the last page.

In very formal and brief letters, one writes only on one side of the page. In all others, we should follow the natural order of the pages, and not skip from one to three, and from two to four, as many do; nor write lengthwise on one page and crosswise on another. With stationery and postage as cheap as they are, there is no excuse for crossed letters.

A lady's visiting card is a safe guide as to her name on the superscription of a letter to her. If you know how she wishes to be addressed, do not alter her preferred form because you think another form is

more correct or elegant. To do so is impertinent; and to make a mistake in the name, which a little attention would have hindered, shows a carelessness which can hardly fail to prejudice the recipient of the letter against the writer thereof.

A married lady is addressed on the envelope by her husband's name as, for example,

Mrs. David Russell,
40 Euclid Ave.,
Cleveland, O.

A widow, being entitled to retain her husband's name on her visiting card may continue to be so addressed by letter; but if on her card she reverts to her baptismal name, then her letters must be so directed.

An unmarried lady, of any age, is addressed, for example, as Miss Morse or Miss Mary Morse, according to her rank in her family, or as her cards set forth.

Never address a letter, whatever the position of the recipient, without the Mr., Mrs., or Miss, which courteous custom demands.

A letter to any lady with whom one is but little acquainted, begins My dear Madam, not Madam; and never Dear Miss.

In less formal relations one begins, for example, My dear Mrs. Newton or Dear Mrs. Newton, My dear Miss Gray or Dear Miss Gray; and with intimate friends one uses the Christian name.

In writing to men or women, My dear Sir or My dear Madam or My dear Mrs. — or Miss —, implies a greater formality than Dear Sir, Dear Madam, etc.

Letters, to whomsoever written, always conclude with some complimentary expression, as Yours truly, Yours sincerely, Yours faithfully, Yours cordially, etc. Good taste must decide the form.

A man may sign himself "Yours respectfully" to a woman even many years his junior, but a woman would not use this form to a man of her own age or younger than she, unless his position in church or state required it.

If one's letter is rather long, one repeats the name at the end, as,

I am, dear Miss Wilson,
Yours, with sincere regard,

— —.

Invitations.

Invitations to large and formal entertainments are engraved, either on thick white paper, folded once in the middle, or on large cards. The style varies, but a fashionable stationer is always ready with the latest. Invitations to a dinner are given in the name of both host and hostess.

This is a good form : —

*Mr. and Mrs. Francis Gilbert
request the pleasure of
Mr. and Mrs. George Doane's
company at Dinner,
February sixteenth, at seven o'clock.
912 Bacon Street.*

A lady may, if she prefers, write her own dinner invitations, but the same form must be used.

The acceptance would be in this form : —

*Mr. and Mrs. George Doane
accept with pleasure the polite invitation of
Mr. and Mrs. Francis Gilbert
for dinner
on February sixteenth, at seven o'clock.*

If they are unable to accept, this regret would be sent : —

Mr. and Mrs. George Doane
regret extremely that a previous engagement
must deprive them of the pleasure of accepting the
invitation of
Mr. and Mrs. Francis Gilbert
for Dinner,
on February sixteenth, at seven o'clock.

These invitations should be answered immediately, and with a positive acceptance or a regret. They cannot be accepted conditionally. If, after acceptance, anything happen to make the keeping of the engagement impossible, write at once to your hostess, so that your place may be supplied.

One does not use R. S. V. P. (*Repondez s'il vous plait*) nor the better English form, The favor of an answer is requested, after an invitation to dinner, as every one is supposed to know that such invitation *must* be answered, and with promptitude.

Invitations to a wedding are also engraved, and are sent in the name of both parents, in this form : —

*Mr. and Mrs. John Atwood
request your presence at the marriage of their
daughter*

*Grace to Maurice Talbot
at St. Mary's Cathedral,
on Wednesday, June fifth, at nine o'clock.*

or,

*Mr. and Mrs. David Ormond
request the pleasure of your company
at the marriage of their daughter,
on Thursday, June sixth, at ten o'clock.*

Church of the Holy Trinity.

With this latter form, which would be preferred if the bride have a stepfather, the cards of the bride and bridegroom-elect are enclosed.

A widower or a widow issues the cards for a daughter's marriage in his or her name alone. If the bride is orphaned the cards can be sent in the name of an aunt or married sister, substituting sister or niece for daughter in the formula.

If the church wedding be followed by a reception, those bidden to the latter receive also with the invitation to the church, a card : —

Reception
at 25 Linwood Ave.,
At 2 P. M.

or,

At Home
after the ceremony,
16 Forest Hill Street.

Answers are not sent to wedding invitations; but those who cannot attend send their cards to the bride's parents or the relatives issuing the invitation, to assure them that it has been received.

Invitations to large evening entertainments, as also to luncheons, "At Homes," garden parties, are in the name of the hostess alone.

In the first case this is a proper form: —

Mrs. Geoffrey Desmond
requests the pleasure of ——— company
on Tuesday evening, January tenth,
at nine o'clock.

The favor of an answer is requested.

The hostess may write: Dancing, Music, in the lower-left hand corner, to indicate the nature of the entertainment, but never the word "ball."

For invitations to receptions, teas, etc., the hostess may use her visiting card. If the reception be given in honor of some celebrity or a visiting friend, she writes on the card, To Meet (name of the guest of honor), with the date and the hour; in other cases, At Home, with the date and hour.

These invitations do not require an answer.

Fashion now discountenances abbreviations and figures, except in business correspondence. The number of the street, however, may be in figures.

As fashion is changeable, do not criticise people who hold to the older custom.

Invitations to formal dinners and luncheons are not sent to people in deep mourning, but all other invitations are sent as usual, after a month from the time of bereavement.

Invitations to informal dinners and other informal entertainments are written by the hostess in the first person, and answered, of course, in the first person.

A young unmarried lady never sends invitations in her own name. All invitations to a refined home are from the heads thereof.

If the oldest daughter of a widower preside over his household, his name and hers may appear together for dinners, receptions, and At Homes. In such case,

also, the daughter, if no longer very young, may issue her own cards for a tea; but even in her invitations to small and informal entertainments, she writes for her father and herself, as, for example:—

Dear Miss Sutherland:—

It will give great pleasure to my father and to me, if you and your brother will dine with us on Sunday next, at two o'clock.

Yours faithfully;

Janet Winslow.

Boston, January second, Eighteen Hundred and Ninety-five.

Invitations should all be mailed at once. The reason of this is too obvious to be insisted on. No one should be made to feel that he has been a second thought. Invitations to dinners, luncheons, At Homes, are sent a week or a fortnight in advance; to parties, a fortnight or three weeks in advance.

Letters of introduction, in the giving of which one should be most prudent, are always written in a spirit of kindness and compliment to the bearer. On the envelope with the name, and when necessary, the address appears, also the name of the person introduced, as,

Mrs. Peter Van Buren

Introducing Miss Dodge.

or

Mr. Paul Merritt,

55 Franklin St.,

Boston.

Introducing Mr. James French.

The bereaved who wear mourning have their visiting cards with a narrow black margin, and their stationery of dead white with a similar black margin; the heavy mourning borders are no longer in the best form.

There are bereaved persons—some of them the sincerest of mourners—who do not wear mourning, object to it on principle. These do not, of course, use black-edged cards or mourning stationery.

If you are not in mourning yourself, do not use mourning stationery in letters of condolence.

It is always in good taste to seal letters with sealing wax and a seal—if one wishes to do so; but the glued envelope is equally correct and more convenient; and in sending letters to distant countries it should be remembered that the wax melts in hot climates.

MAKING FRIENDS AND KEEPING THEM.

FIFTH EDITION,

BY KATHERINE E. CONWAY.

Opinions of the Press.

From the Boston Herald:—

IF Miss Conway's suggestions were faithfully followed, a great many people would find life far sweeter and more beautiful. She has struck a vein which has been unworked.

From the Boston Courier:—

THE topics handled with such good sense, strength, and delicacy in this monograph on a theme so invariably interesting are varicously related to the central thought of friendship and the surest way to keep it in constant repair. These fair pages carry away a lesson worth giving careful attention to.

From the Ave Maria:—

NOR Emerson nor Bacon has written so wisely of friendship as has Katherine E. Conway in this delightful little book. . . . Platonic friendship, under the title "His Woman Friend," is intelligently and delicately treated in chapter second. Indeed, every point is marked by rare common-sense, as well as a fine appreciation of that best of gifts — friendship.

From the Boston Globe:—

EXCELLENT knowledge of character and motives, with fine literary qualities.

From the Somerville Journal:—

ANOTHER interesting and valuable book for its many suggestions and its fulness of wisdom has been written by Katherine E. Conway, under the title of "Making Friends and Keeping Them." . . . In its small compass it deals thoughtfully and thoroughly with many of the important and delicate problems of friendship.

From the Boston Beacon:—

THE title of Katherine Conway's little book should at once commend it to the notice of all who have the deeper social nature which demands of the cherished few something more than mere acquaintance. The brief and pointed essays making up the contents of the volume cover a wide ground, and are eminently practical.

From the Messenger of the Sacred Heart:—

It is only a few months since we had the pleasure of noticing the first edition of "A Lady and Her Letters." Our commendation of it was unqualified. The best proof of its merit, however, is that a new edition has been so soon called for. Its companion volume—"Making Friends and Keeping Them"—if anything, is superior in merit to the first. Its theme is more comprehensive. The relations which it treats are more far-reaching and delicate. The treatment requires a more extensive knowledge of human nature and of the ways of the world, and a power of discernment and gift of discretion which are given to few. Miss Conway has brought all these accomplishments to her delicate task in a very high degree. . . . Few are more intimately acquainted with the strength and weakness of woman than Miss Conway; and, conse-

quently, few are better qualified than she to speak with authority to her own sex. She does so with a candor and sweetness and power which cannot fail at the same time to win, to convince, and to influence the reader towards that gentleness, forbearance, constancy, and self-sacrifice which form the characteristic of a true Christian lady. No one can read Miss Conway's books without becoming wiser and better, and thus making a long stride towards reaping the true purpose of life — our own true happiness and the happiness of our fellow-beings.

From the American Ecclesiastical Review : —

EDUCATORS and those who appreciate the advantages of refinement arising from the cultivation of sound principles, together with external accomplishments, will find efficient aid in these exquisite little volumes. They are written with a rare knowledge of human nature, — of its strength as well of its weakness, — and this knowledge is put forth for the benefit of the many who would learn, with confidence-inspiring judgment, winning frankness, and in a tone which attracts, while it exemplifies and illustrates the themes of the writer. Such manuals are easily read, and the charm of their contents is quickly felt. They should, through the co-operation of the clergy, find their way into every family sitting-room, for they instruct in the best kind of knowledge, whilst they edify and delight.

From Donahoe's Magazine : —

THIS is no string of chapters revamping platitudes derived from studying the numberless essays on friendship that have preceded it. It is a fresh and wholesome contribution to the popular literature upon the relationship of friends, the best way to make and to hold them; and the impression vividly conveyed to the reader is that the writer is speaking from

the actual experiences of her own life, which, by the way, has been singularly well cast for the preparation of a book upon the subject treated. Miss Conway's style is sweet, winning, and strong. Her matter is of the very essence of practical wisdom and common sense. There is a pithiness of gentle philosophy throughout the book which will make a hundred at least of its sentences remembered and quoted. Though addressed to women, the advice given is appropriate to both sexes, and no one can read this little book without much clearing up of erroneous impressions regarding the true offices, and mutual conduct of people standing to one another in the happy, consoling, and withal critical relationship of friends. To many after a first perusal this book will become a real treasure of counsel and guidance, and will no doubt save many of its readers from the painful consequences of an ill-advised friendship, or from carrying on a true friendship in an ill-advised way.

From the Catholic Standard and Times, Philadelphia:—

THE table of contents shows ten chapters, each with a name that awakens thought. There are no cool statements which the reader is supposed to accept without protest, but there are facts with which we are familiar, their cause and effects. It is a lady's book, which is equivalent to saying that it is the very best kind of a woman's book.—true, strong, kind, and with a sweet reserve and dignity which expresses culture, self-restraint, and consideration for others — a book for a girl who has sense and uses it. It is dedicated "To Elizabeth A. Cronyn, a Pearl of Women and of Friends," thus associating it most delightfully with happy memories of the Catholic Summer School at Plattsburg.

QUESTIONS OF HONOR IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

(FOURTH EDITION.)

BY KATHERINE E. CONWAY.

Opinions of the Press.

From the American Ecclesiastical Review:—

This is the third volume of Miss Conway's "Family Sitting-Room Series," and we cannot let it pass without a word of comment which may appeal to the clergy. To suggest that this little book represents an important chapter in pastoral theology must seem exaggeration. Yet to know what goes on in the home and society where those of our flock hold converse, who, as the dedication words say, have "in a special way the honor of our holy Faith in their keeping"—this is worth more to the missionary priest than the mastery of scholastic categories. It is true that "Questions of Honor" gives us but a very brief and limited glimpse into ordinary home life; but that glimpse is given in the flash-light of Catholic truth which perpetuates the impression received from its everlasting source. Thus the

priest who, in a more special way than any "Child of Mary," has in his "keeping the honor of our holy Faith" is made to feel more correctly and strongly the sympathy of views and aims which animates the choicer elements of Catholic society. Can we do anything better than take up, and keep up, in sermon or conference with the judicious treatment of the subjects which possess the thoughts of those among the laity who love virtue and would compel its diffusion? Here are, in familiar form, practical religious topics as they fashion themselves in the minds of intelligent Catholics: "The Courtesies of God's House;" "The Letter and Spirit of Sacred Seasons;" "Snobbery in Religion;" "Refinement and Beauty in the Externals of Religion;" "The Liturgy and the S. Scriptures;" such are the main themes touched lightly with a woman's knowing hand, but pointing to a thousand resources of development in the pastoral sphere.

The Very Reverend William Byrne, D.D., V.G., Boston —

Commends the "Questions of Honor" unreservedly, and suggests the fitness of this and the other numbers of the series for supplementary reading in Catholic schools.

From the Catholic University Bulletin (touching on the whole series):

Written chiefly for the home circle, and more particularly for the author's sisters, they contain much that everyone might learn, or knowing, recall to memory. The expression is always correct and elegant in these pages, while the sentiment is fed from the springs of religion, genial common sense, and the science of those canons of politeness and *savoir-faire* which are valid the wide world over, because they are the "fine flower"

of natural charity. From the last page of the "Questions of Honor" we copy a thought which is typical of the work and might easily serve as an introduction to these exquisite manuals of Christian courtesy and gentleness: —

"Let the Catholic woman be not merely what she must be for her own soul's sake, — pure, truthful, charitable, grounded in her faith and exact in its practice; but let her be with this, for the sake of others and for the extension of God's Visible Kingdom, sweet-spirited, cheerful, courteous, patient, generous, large-minded, minutely honorable and faithful; graciously attentive to all social duties and observances, fluent of speech at need, and, withal, steadfast and courageous as any martyr-mother or maiden of the olden time, should she be compelled to choose between God and mammon."

From the Ave Maria: —

"Questions of Honor in the Christian Life" is a book of great interest as well as of solid instruction. It could have been written only by a woman of unerring Catholic instinct, wide observation and thoughtful habit. There is nothing lurid in her philosophy, but neither is there anything watery or apologetic. Our girls who accept her for their mentor will lose no pleasure in life that is worth having, and they will have cultivated a high Christian character. Miss Conway's pen has rendered notable service to the Church in the United States, but none, we believe, so great as the writing of the Family Sitting-Room Series."

Charles Warren Stoddard: —

You have done the very thing that was most needed in Catholic literature, and you have done it perfectly well.

Eliza Allen Starr :—

“Questions of Honor” is even more pleasing to me than the others, because it touches on sacred things so safely, and with such a trained hand. It is a great pleasure to take up these books and feel how near you have come to the hearts and consciences of many whom sermons do not reach.

A. J. Faust, in Church News :—

The book is charmingly discreet, the accomplished author putting himself, from the outset, perfectly *en rapport* with her audience, and discussing great themes with an air of equality with readers that at once captivates attention. It is surely no easy task to acquire the art of fascination in didactic writing for old or young, but I must say that with Miss Conway it is a gift rather than an art . . . “Questions of Honor in the Christian Life” will hold its own place in the Family Sitting-Room Series, and when that series is completed the author will have rendered a literary service to Catholic women of the greatest value. Charming style, refined taste, and earnest faith make Miss Conway’s work a Catholic boon, of which we have no equal in our American literature.

From the Independent (Protestant) :—

The ingenious title of this book brings the author to her subject in the happiest way, and gains her one point in the argument at least. She is herself a Roman Catholic, and writes from the point of view of her church. . . . The book will not hurt the stiffest Protestant, but may do him much good. When the easy allowances for difference of ecclesiastical membership are made, there still remains a residuum, and a large one, of pure gold for all believers.

A DREAM OF LILIES.

(THIRD EDITION.)

By KATHERINE E. CONWAY,

Opinions of the Press.

From the Boston Transcript:—

HERE appear the music and spontaneity of the true singer who sings simply because it has pleased God to make her nature such that, when stripped of restraint and left to follow its bent, singing is its inevitable outcome ; of one who sings from pure joyousness, and for the song's sake. . . . Out of the initial (and title) allegory, "A Dream of Lilies"—to select just one—breathes a haunting melody that, once heard, refuses thereafter to be ignored, but lingers and recurs perpetually with its persistent and welcome charm.

From the Catholic World:—

GRACEFUL and tender, and devoid of pretentiousness in treatment, they at the same time reflect a depth of feeling and a grasp of imagination that, with a more forcible vehicle of expression, must strike the reader as the attributes of the true poetic mind. In method, at times, Miss Conway reminds one somewhat of the painstaking and delicate treatment seen in Spenser's work, minus its effort and ornateness. The title poem is a very beautiful bit of sensitive writing ; were it not too lengthy for the purpose, we would anticipate some of the reader's pleasure by quoting it bodily. Many will find throughout the volume the experiences and emotions that gladden or cloud our daily existence treated in such a way by the skilful hand of the author as cannot fail to bring the comfort we all feel, no matter how philosophic we be, from the true and beautiful expression of the feelings which stir us.

WATCHWORDS FROM JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY.

(SIXTH EDITION.)

EDITED AND WITH ESTIMATE, BY KATHERINE E. CONWAY.

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes:—

It is a most dainty and charming book to look upon, and it contains the utterances of a true poet, who was also a true man.

John Greenleaf Whittier:—

My dear friend, Katherine E. Conway: I thank thee for the beautiful book with its just and appreciative estimate of Boyle O'Reilly as a true and noble man, and a poet of whom not only Ireland but America should be proud. Reading the "Watchwords," I was never before so impressed with the beauty and wisdom of his verse. Liberal, generous, liberty-loving, holding fast his own faith without bigotry or intolerance, he held a place in our country's literature which no other can fill.

Edmund Clarence Stedman:—

NOTHING could have more individuality in its beauty, material, and moral than this tribute.

CHRISTIAN SYMBOLS AND STORIES
OF THE SAINTS.

(FIFTH EDITION, \$1.50.)

By CLARA ERSKINE CLEMENT.

EDITED BY KATHERINE E. CONWAY.

*Houghton, Mifflin & Company,
Boston and New York.*

JUL 6 1908

